

the side-wall. He must have tried that. But while getting out he must have seen a thick wall of human beings at a distance but right in front. In trying to avoid them he had no alternative but to mount the roof, little realizing that on the other slope of the roof I was still searching for him.

The dead body of the panther served as a suitable specimen for me to teach the boys of the Forest Rangers' College how to flay for trophies. The skinning was done by the vegetarians amongst the students. I thought it best to present the trophy to their Mess.

INDIAN FOREST COLLEGE,
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August 4, 1962

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2. THE IDENTITY OF THE MALAYAN MOLE

The Malayan Mole was first described by Chasen (1940) from two specimens obtained in the Cameron Highlands, Pahang, Malaya, in 1937. Of these only the type (British Museum No. 47.1418 : Raffles Museum No. 4334) is now available for comparison. Chasen named the new form *malayana*, and placed it in the species *Talpa klossi* Thomas 1929, from Thailand, distinguishing between the two races *klossi* and *malayana* on coat colour alone. In his description he noted that when a fresh skin of *malayana* and the type of *klossi* (collected in 1924) were 'placed side by side *malayana* shows up as dark iron-grey against the paler brownish colour of the more northern form'.

In March 1962 four more moles were caught in the Cameron Highlands (Cranbrook & Medway 1962). Of these, two have been presented to the Department of Zoology in the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, and two to the British Museum (Natural History) in London. All four were 'dark iron-grey' in colour and should clearly be assigned to *malayana*. The two specimens taken to London were compared with the type of *malayana* in April 1962. This was found to have faded and to be indistinguishable in colour from the type of *T. klossi* (B.M. No. 28.5.3.1) with which it had been compared in 1939. In both the tips of the hairs were 'paler brownish' and the over-all appearance brown, but in both the 'dark iron-grey' colour could clearly be seen on the basal two-thirds or so of the hairs when these were parted.

The taxonomy of the moles of SE. Asia is in some confusion, but all specimens known seem to fall into one or other of the species or sub-species originally described as *T. micrura* Hodgson 1841, *T. leucura*

Blyth 1850, *T. klossi* Thomas 1929, and *T. k. malayana* Chasen 1940. Stroganov (1948) distributed them amongst three genera as *Eoscalops micrura*, *Parascaptor leucura*, and *Euroscaptor klossi*. Schwarz (1948) and (following Schwarz) Ellerman & Morrison-Scott (1951) treated *leucura* as a subspecies of *T. micrura*, reducing *klossi* and *malayana* to synonyms. Subsequently Stein (1960) recognized the following:

Genus *Talpa* Linnaeus 1758: dentition $\frac{1}{1}$ (44)

T. k. klossi Thomas (Thailand, Tonkin). Diagnosis: Coat colour brown

T. k. malayana Chasen (Malaya). Diagnosis: Dark iron-grey as against light brown of nominate form

T. micrura Hodgson (Southern Himalayas, Nepal, Sikkim, Assam). Diagnosis: Tail hidden in fur

Genus *Parascaptor* Gill 1875: dentition 1^0 (42)

P. leucura Blyth (Assam, Burma, to north Thailand and eastward into Yunnan). Diagnosis: Dentition $\frac{1}{1}$ (42)

The dried skins of the forms with 44 teeth, which Stein assigned to the genus *Talpa*, are liable to fade to a greater or lesser extent. As has been shown above, the type of *T. k. malayana* has faded badly. The same may be true of the type of *T. klossi*. The only specimens of *T. k. klossi*, other than the type, available for comparison in London are three collected in Tonkin by Delacour & Lowe in 1929 (B.M. Nos. 33.4.147, 148, & 149). In April 1962 all were dark iron-grey in colour, like the freshly captured specimens of *malayana* from the Cameron Highlands. There are two skulls which have dentition $\frac{1}{1}$ (44).

Blanford (1888) says of *T. micrura*: 'Colour uniformly velvety black when fresh . . . dried skins are often brown.' Of 17 skins of *T. micrura* in the British Museum (Natural History), 15 collected between the middle of last century and 1920 have faded to a 'paler brownish colour', like that of the types of *T. klossi* and *T. k. malayana* today. In most of them some trace of dark iron-grey remains at the base of the hairs. Two collected in 1947 have a brownish tinge on the tips of the hairs, but look black at first sight. It is clear that the dried skins of *klossi*, *malayana*, and *micrura* are liable to fade and that any diagnosis based on the coat colour of any save freshly caught specimens must be suspect. This is in marked contrast with the skins of the European and western Asiatic species of *Talpa*. Of 150 skins of these in the British Museum all seem to have retained their original colour.

Skins of *leucura*, with 42 teeth, which Stein assigned to the genus *Parascaptor*, may fade to a limited extent though none of those in the British Museum (Natural History) have faded as much as is suggested by Blanford (1888), who says of *leucura*: 'Colour uniformly brown in all the skins that I have seen, but described as black by Anderson, perhaps variable.' Anderson was a collector and saw the animals in

the flesh. I collected *leucura* in Upper Burma in 1931, and wrote of freshly caught specimens in my field note book: 'like *T. europaea* (i.e. dark iron-grey) but with a white tail constricted next to the body'. Of nine skins of *leucura* in the British Museum none are 'uniformly brown': eight collected between 1908 and 1940 have a slight rusty tinge on the tips of the hairs; in the ninth, collected in 1937 and badly preserved, the brown is a little more obvious. The degree of browning of the first eight is very slight and I think it is quite possible that with only the recollection of the colour of *T. europaea* in my mind I would have described the animals I caught as being 'like *europaea*' if they had been the same colour when freshly caught as the dried skins are in 1962. All look black in the museum drawer at first sight, as opposed to the brown skins of *micrura*.

Though the colour of the dried skins of these SE. Asian moles is not a reliable diagnostic feature, *T. klossi* and *malayana* can be separated by a factor other than coat colour. Stein (1960) discussing the Asiatic moles with dentition $\frac{1}{1}$ (44), showed how the tail of *malayana* is both absolutely and proportionately shorter than that of *klossi*, 5% of the head and body length as opposed to 8%. He separated both from *micrura* with 'an extremely short tail, hidden in the fur', 4% of the head and body length, paraphrasing Blanford (1888): 'tail extremely short, nearly naked and completely concealed by the fur,' and Hodgson (1841): 'velvety black . . . The tail very small, rudimentary.' Thomas (1929) in his description of *klossi* said: 'club-shaped tail, about as in *Parascaptor leucurus*.' I have only seen dried skins of *klossi* but I have both *leucura* and *malayana* in the flesh. The tails of both are club-shaped but that of *leucura* is obvious at first sight, projecting well beyond the fur on the rump. The collectors' measurements of the tails of the type of *klossi* and of three specimens from Tonkin are 11, 11, 15, 16 mm. and of 7 specimens of *leucura* 10, 12, 12, 14, 14, 15, 15 mm. respectively. The tail of *malayana* is shorter, only the extreme tip being visible in the fur on the rump. The collectors' measurements of the tails of the type *malayana*, of one other caught at the same time, and of the four obtained in the Cameron Highlands in 1962 are 6, 7, 5, 6, 7, 7 mm. respectively.

Though measurements made by different collectors can only be compared with reservations, *micrura* and *malayana* are much the same size, *klossi* rather smaller. Average and extremes of the head and body lengths of 9 specimens of *micrura* obtained by the same collectors are 128 (106-142) mm., of 6 specimens of *malayana* (2 collectors) 121 (112-132) mm., and of 4 specimens of *klossi* (2 collectors) 110 (100-116) mm.

The status of *klossi* cannot be determined with any certainty until more and fresh material is available from Thailand and Tonkin.

Malayana however is clearly distinct and is very close to *micrura* in size, tail length, coat colour, and tendency to fade. Possibly the two forms are synonymous, but until more material is available from the intermediate areas it is better to regard *malayana* as a subspecies of *micrura* : *Talpa micrura malayana* Chasen.

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THE EARL OF CRANBROOK

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3. GESTATION PERIOD OF THE FOURHORNED ANTELOPE *TETRACERUS QUADRICORNIS* (BLAINVILLE)

In March 1958 I reported the gestation period of the Fourhorned Antelope *Tetracerus quadricornis* (Blainville) as 'slightly over eight months, a rather long period for such a small animal' (*J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 55 : 339).

As the Editors suggested that 'it would be wise to wait for confirmation of the period by further observation' the writer has again checked the gestation period. The female Fourhorned Antelope mated on 24 March 1962 in its small compound at Ahwa, Dangs District, Gujarat State. At no time were the male and female together after mating. It delivered a male fawn on 12 November 1962, a period only twelve days less than eight months. This datum proves that the former period was correct as reported. The first doe had a gestation period of 243 days and the second doe a period of 228 days, a difference of only fifteen days. Such differences are not uncommon among mammals of the same species.

The mother of the present fawn was the antelope which was born